

(Gavel.) Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: I have here a letter from the Douglas County separate juvenile court, signed by Judge Buckley. I won't read all of it to you, but I want you to know what she says. I think this is important to you because it concerns the boys at Kearney as well as the girls at Geneva. This comes from a judge who has experience, first hand experience. "My experience with the Youth Development Center at Kearney has been that when they become overcrowded they simply parole young men, whether they are ready or not. This results in many boys getting in further difficulty with the law, only to be returned to the Youth Development Center at Kearney through the court system." I think any of you who have been reading the newspaper will know that many of the crimes that are committed are repeat offenders. So I think what Judge Buckley is saying here is backed up by what you've been reading in the newspapers and seeing on televisions. Repeat offenders who were let out too soon because Kearney is already overcrowded. Secondly, she said, and this is important. "My experience with the young girls, sent to Geneva, is that they stay much longer and rarely have to return to Geneva for further care." The Kearney facility, as she stated, paroles young boys just because they get overcrowded. Then we have more crimes committed and we have to go through the court system again and return them to Kearney when they should not have been released in the first place. As I've often heard my good friend, Senator Warner, say, if it ain't broke don't fix it. According to a juvenile court judge who probably hears more juvenile cases than any other judges across the state, Geneva is working. Kearney is not working that well because it is already overcrowded, so it does no point in combining them. So I urge the support of Senator Eret's LB 709 and moreover the support for these young girls who are at Geneva so that they do get the rehabilitation that Geneva supplies. Thank you, senators, for your attention.

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) May we have quiet please. (Gavel.) Order in the Chamber. (Gavel.) Senator Miller, then Senator Hoagland.

SENATOR MILLER: Mr. Speaker and members, I want to backup what Marge has said. I have had the opportunity to tour both of those establishments. I would like to save \$400,000, as I think our Appropriations Committee would like